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To the Members of the
Union League. Philadelphia
1875.

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TO THE MEMBERS

of the

Union League.

At a large meeting, held at the La Pierre House, October 6, 1875, the following statement of the appointment and action of the Committee of Sixty-two was read and ordered to be printed and sent to each member of the League.

Philadelphia, Oct. 6, 1875.

To the Members of the Union League.

Gentlemen,—"The Committee of Sixty-two" of the Union League, appointed by your President, under resolutions unanimously adopted by the Board of Directors in April last, to aid in obtaining the nomination of proper men for the State and County offices, to be filled at the approaching general election, has, as you are well aware, taken a decided stand against the further continuance of Ring rule in this city, and has declined to indorse those nominees whose selection represents only the command of the present controlling party managers.

The Committee, as was expected, has been violently assailed by some for the independent ground thus taken, and it has been asserted, that in this action it does not faithfully represent the views of the body of the League. The majority of the Committee firmly believes that the contrary is the case, and that its recent resolutions have the hearty approval of much the larger number of the members of the League.

To set this question at rest, a special meeting of the League has been called for Thursday, October 14, at 8 P.M., and the greatest desire which the "twenty-nine" members of the Committee have in reference to this meeting is that it shall be attended by every member who can possibly be present, and that every one shall vote with a full understanding of all the facts attending the present question.

The following statement of the constitution and action of the Committee, and of some attendant circumstances, is therefore submitted for your careful consideration.

At a special meeting of the League, called to take such action as might aid in securing suitable nominations for officers to be elected in February, 1875, which was held November 19, 1874, and was very numerously attended, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

"*Whereas*, The approaching municipal election is of special importance in view of the responsible character of the offices which are to be filled under the provisions of the new constitution; whereas, the result of the recent elections throughout the country has demonstrated that the intelligent voters will not be blindly subject to the control of mere party attachment;

"*Resolved*, That the Union League, faithful to the purposes expressed in its charter of fostering and promoting the love of Republican government, in view of the present situation hereby expresses its continued approval of the spirit of the resolutions adopted at a special meeting held May 21, 1868, in reference to the selection of honest and capable men as candidates for office.

"*Resolved*, That the influence and support of the Union League and its members should and will be given only to candidates of unexceptionable character, and whose fitness for office is such as to leave no room for doubt; and that the candidates who are unfit through want of capacity and character, or who shall obtain their nominations through improper means, deserve and must expect to lose the votes of right-thinking men who place the welfare of the public above mere devotion to party.

"*Resolved*, That there is an urgent call for all who desire the success of the Union Republican party to attend the delegate elections and use every exertion to secure the nominations of capable and honest candidates for the several offices to be voted for at the election in February.

"*Resolved*, That the Union League of Philadelphia will use its influence and the means of such of its members as may voluntarily contribute for the purpose to defeat all incompetent, dishonest, or otherwise unworthy candidates at the coming election.

"*Resolved*, That a special Committee of Fifty-eight be appointed by the chair to take steps to carry out the purposes of these resolutions and secure the objects of this meeting."

Under these resolutions, a Committee was appointed; and as its course of action is now contrasted with that of the Committee of Sixty-two, it is well to mark some of the principal features of its proceedings.

It organized November 25, 1874, with thirty-one members present, and on the 27th instructed its Chairman to fill the places of non-attending members. On February 2, 1875 (only fourteen days before the election), it pronounced two candidates on the regularly nominated Republican ticket, without pretending to summon them before the committee, unfitted for and unworthy of office; and on February 10, 1875, at a meeting at which but twenty-three members attended (seven less than a majority of the whole Committee), it indorsed one of the new candidates by a vote of sixteen ayes to seven nays.

Among the active members of this Committee were the following gentlemen; most of them are now among the loudest in attacking the action of the Committee of Sixty-two:

CLAYTON MCMICHAEL, Esq., editor of the *North American*.
WM. W. NEVIN, Esq., editor of the *Press*.
GIBSON PEACOCK, Esq., editor of the *Bulletin*.
WM. ELLIOTT, Esq., Sheriff of Philadelphia.
SAMUEL BELL, Esq., Clerk of Circuit Court.
HENRY C. HOWELL, Esq., Ex-Sheriff.
WM. H. KERN, Esq., Ex-Sheriff.
LEWIS WALN SMITH, Esq., Ex-Assistant-Attorney-General of Penna.
M. HALL STANTON, Esq., President Board of Education.

At the same meeting an address was adopted, from which the following extracts are taken:

"From the best information attainable they recommended thirteen out of the fifteen Republican candidates, and the *two from whom their recommendations were withheld*, with great propriety subsequently withdrew."

"The Republican magisterial ticket stands to-day *purged of those to whom the committee objected*, and composed of nominees all of whom merit public trust."

Almost immediately following the League meeting of November, 1874, came the December election for a Board of Directors, at which, after an unprecedented contest, a new Board was elected by a very decided majority. The *only* issue then presented (notwithstanding the efforts of the friends of the old Board to pervert the character of the movement against it) and indorsed by the League, was that contained in the resolution and

statement to be found in the reply of the Members' Committee to the letter of Hon. Charles Gibbons of December 11, 1874, as follows:

"'*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this meeting that the Officers and Directors of the Union League should consist of men possessing the entire confidence of the Union League and community, and who not being themselves holders of, or aspirants for, political office, are free from every suspicion of bias towards any political clique or combination.'

"Our position, in short, is this,—The League has by its action at the late meeting promised to sit in judgment upon future nominations made for State and Municipal offices; to assist in the nomination and promote the election of good men, and to prevent the nomination and defeat the election of bad men.

"We sincerely desire to see this movement carried out, but we do not believe that the League will be in a condition to do so; nor that it will be, or at least will be considered to be, an impartial judge in this matter, if it shall contain in its Board of Directors a number of gentlemen who, either from the fact that they actually hold office or expect soon to do so, have a *direct personal interest* in the success of their party and its candidates, aside from any question of their fitness. We think it would be too much to expect these gentlemen to be of so superior a nature that they would decline to use the influence, which they undoubtedly would have in the management of the League, to assist the success of their friends. We wish to prevent even an inference that the League will be hampered in its expected good work by the presence in its management of those who cannot be free agents in judgment."

By the action of the League at its special meeting of November, and in the election of the new Board in December, 1874, two things were clearly determined upon: That the League (after some inaction) should enter into the field of reform within the Republican party, and that its officers, to whom this work was recommitted, "should be free from every suspicion of bias towards any political clique or combination."

The Board, had it been disposed, could not have disregarded these positive mandates of the League. It felt bound, as it is believed it was also its pleasure, to endeavor to carry them out.

The Committee of Fifty-eight, by the very terms of its constitution, ceased to exist after the February election, and it became necessary that a new Committee should be appointed.

The following Preamble and Resolutions were accordingly pre-

sented at the stated meeting of the Board of Directors held April 13, 1875, and, after a full discussion regarding the power of the Board in the premises, were unanimously adopted:

"*Whereas*, At a special meeting of the Union League held on November 19, 1874, to take such action as might be necessary to promote suitable nominations for officers under the new constitution, it was unanimously

"*Resolved*, That the influence and support of the Union League and its members should and will be given only to candidates of unexceptionable character, and whose fitness for office shall leave no room for doubt, and that candidates who shall obtain their nominations through improper means deserve and should expect to lose the votes of right-thinking men who prefer to place the welfare of the people before the success of party;

"*And Whereas*, At the approaching election the most important State and city offices are to be filled, the Republican candidates for which will be nominated in June next;

"*And Whereas*, Also, the result of the recent elections in Pennsylvania and throughout the United States has demonstrated the necessity for the greatest care in the selection of the candidates, and that only the best men in the Republican party should be placed in nomination; therefore

"*Resolved*, That this Board, recognizing the unanimous sentiment of the members of the Union League as expressed at their special meeting on the 19th of November last, desires to continue in the course of action they then indicated, and to use the influence of this organization towards securing such nominations by the Republican party as will command the suffrages of the people.

"*Resolved*, That a special committee of sixty-two be appointed by the President to carry out the objects of this preamble and resolution."

The following gentlemen of the Board were then present: Messrs. J. P. Verree, E. C. Knight, Charles E. Smith, E. S. Clarke, J. Frailey Smith, Samuel C. Perkins, Richard Wright, William Camac, Thomas Hart, Jr., John J. Hartmann, James V. Watson, Franklin A. Comly, William C. Houston, George Philler, Silas W. Pettit, and John Hockley, Jr.; the President, two Vice-Presidents, and thirteen (out of fifteen) Directors. Total, sixteen out of twenty.

The entire legality of this Committee and its authority to act and speak for the League were not questioned until its recent action obliged its opponents to seek some technical ground upon which to attack it. The most that the *Evening Bulletin*, its earliest

enemy, ventured to assert was, that the Committee of Fifty-eight "still lived," and that the League had two Committees. The error of this has been shown. On the contrary, its standing and authority were everywhere recognized by the press and the members of the League; by the editor of the *Press*, one of its members (now its assailant); and even by General Bingham himself. That gentleman, in his address before the Committee, gave no hint of doubt on this subject, and again and again addressed it as the duly constituted representative of the League.

This matter, however, is not an open question, and is concluded by a reference to the By-Laws of the League:

"ARTICLE II.—*Powers and Functions of Officers.*

"SECTION II. They [the Board of Directors] shall have power to appoint Executive Committees, to carry into effect any of the objects expressed in the preamble to the act of incorporation, and to prescribe their respective duties.

"SECTION III. They shall have and exercise a general superintendence of the affairs of the League, and shall control and manage its property and effects."

Under these By-Laws, drawn by Hon. Charles Gibbons and adopted by the body of the League, the power to appoint any committee which the League itself can appoint, is vested in the Board of Directors.

It is under this power that the Publication Committee of the League, the only standing political committee, exists. That Committee has expended thousands of dollars and distributed thousands of political documents.

The following references to the minutes of the Board of Directors will show some of the occasions upon which this power has been exercised.

On October 26, 1863, the Board, on motion of Hon. Morton McMichael,

"*Resolved*, That the members of the Board, in conjunction with such members of the League as the Board may appoint, shall constitute a Committee *to take any action in regard to future elections as the Committee may think proper.*"

On June 11, 1867, a communication was received from Fred. Fraley, Esq., inclosing the call of a number of citizens connected with the Republican party for a meeting to consider what measures could be taken to secure honest and competent men as candidates for the *different offices of the City Government*, at the (then) next election, and stating that that meeting had resolved to request the Union League to co-operate with it in its effort at reform, and to appoint for that purpose a committee to confer and act with the Citizens' Committee. The Board thereupon authorized the President to appoint a committee of five, in accordance with this request. The committee consisted of three members of the Board and two members of the League, not in the Board.

On December 17, 1867, on motion of Mr. McMichael, a committee of five was appointed to confer with gentlemen from the interior of the State, with a view to the organization of the Republican party throughout the State.

On January 27, 1868, the President was empowered to appoint a committee to draw up a proper statement, to be addressed to the members of the League and the Republicans of Philadelphia.

On January 12, 1869, on motion of Mr. Chas. Gibbons, a committee was appointed by the Board on the subject of a law for the registration of voters.

On September 13, 1870, a committee was appointed and empowered to associate five members of the League with it to consider the question of constitutional reform, and to take such measures as the committee might deem advisable.

On January 13, 1874, the Board authorized the President to appoint a committee of twenty members (seven to be members of the Board), to prepare and promote such legislation as was needed to secure improvements in the municipal government of Philadelphia.

On May 12, 1874, on motion of Mr. Gibbons, it was resolved that a committee be appointed to confer with committees of the Reform Club and Law Association, for the purpose of bringing forward the names of suitable persons as candidates for Judges of

the Orphans' Court and of the Court of Common Pleas, to be voted for at the (then) next general election.

There are also a number of occasions upon which Campaign Committees, Conference Committees, Committees of inquiry into political matters, and other like purposes, have been appointed by the Board of Directors.

Shortly after the Board Meeting of April, 1875, before referred to, the President appointed the following gentlemen upon the Committee of Sixty-two. As some comment has been made upon the *juvenile* character of the Committee, the names are arranged according to the years during which the members joined the League.

COMMITTEE OF SIXTY-TWO.

Two elected in 1863, *the first year of the League, whose charter is dated March* 30, 1864.

Amos R. Little.	E. S. Mawson.	Joseph H. Trotter.
Lemuel Coffin.	Thos. C. Price.	Edward Shippen.
Joel J. Baily.	Henry P. Smith.	E. T. Chase.
Louis C. Madeira.	Andrew Wheeler	A. J. Antelo.
Edward Strickland.	Ferdinand J. Dreer.	Chas. S. Pancoast.
Lewis D. Baugh.	Edwin Greble	Abraham Barker.
Aubrey H. Smith.	Edwin R. Cope.	

Five elected in 1864.

Jos. T. Thomas.	Paul J. Field.	Robert R. Corson.
J. G. Rosengarten.		Chas. J. Field.

Nine elected in 1865.

John S. Stairs.	Thos. A. Boyd.	J. H. Harkness.
E. Dunbar Lockwood.	Jas. Freeborn.	Jas. V. Ingham, M.D.
S. H. Rothermel.	T. B. Lancaster.	Elwood Johnson.

Four elected in 1866.

Chas. W. Pickering.	Chas. F. Hulse.	H. G. Sickel.
	H. Armitt Brown.	

Two elected in 1867.

Geo. D. McCreary.	Wm. W. Nevin.

Five elected in 1868.

Thos. Hart, Jr.	Henry Bettle.	Wm. M. Whitaker.
Wm. H. Rhawn.		Geo. W. Fiss.

Five elected in 1869.

Watson Malone. Samuel B. Huey. Samuel Castner, Jr.
Walter Lippincott. Alfred M. Collins.

Three elected in 1870.

Silas W. Pettit. Nicholas Lennig. Fred. R. Shelton.

Two elected in 1871.

Robert D. Coxe. Chas. B. McMichael.

Four elected in 1872.

Jos. Lapsley Wilson. J. T. Way.
C. C. Dunn. Chas. Williams.

One elected in 1873.

C. B. Andress.

One elected in 1874.

Henry Whelen, Jr.

One elected in 1875.

E. T. Steel.

Thirty-four members, more than a majority of the Committee, were elected during the first three years of the existence of the League.

This Committee at once organized, and adopted the following address and resolutions:

To the Republican Voters of Pennsylvania:

"The Union League of Philadelphia has appointed a committee of sixty-two members to aid in obtaining the nomination of proper men for the State and County offices, to be filled at the approaching general election. This object, always to be sought, is now of paramount importance to the success of the Republican party. For the first time in a long series of years the State has been carried by our political opponents, and they are so encouraged that they look for further gain in November. It is not believed, however, that the late Democratic success in this State indicates any change in the sentiment of the people, and still less a departure of our great Commonwealth from the principles which have guided her action for so many years. Complaint exists, but it is not against the doctrines of the Republican party. It is only against some of the *men* to whom the administration of affairs has lately been intrusted, and who have by their reckless conduct brought odium and defeat upon the whole organization. A wholesome disgust with this condition of affairs has caused a large number of our citizens to conclude that the mere promulgation of a platform is of secondary importance, and that

it ought not to insure the success and atone for the demerits of incapable or corrupt men, using it only to credit and support themselves. Many of the best men of the Republican party are thus strongly disposed to place the question of the personal fitness and worth of candidates for office above that of their political views, and in the case of improper nominations either to refuse to vote at all or to vote against their inclination and political opinion. This feeling is nowhere stronger than in our own city and State; and it must be conceded that a large body of Republican voters here has determined to throw its influence and votes against any and all nominees of the party whenever they are not such as to deserve and command support. This is the whole lesson of the last election. If we are willing to be taught, success is certain. If, on the contrary, no improvement shall be made in the character of the candidates presented, nothing but disastrous and deserved defeat awaits us. The Union League of Philadelphia has always been the recognized adherent and efficient promoter of Republican principles, and it has no intention to abandon the duties of its position. In the present emergency, however, it is bound to look to the future and permanent benefit of the whole Republican party, and to place this national object above the temporary success of unprincipled men, happening for the time to be its candidates for State or municipal offices.

"Holding these views, and believing that sincere reform within the Republican party is not only generally desired, but is absolutely necessary to its success and preservation, and earnestly desiring that it may retain its old position and strength, this committee of sixty-two, representing the Union League of Philadelphia, has therefore

"*Resolved*, That we earnestly call upon our Republican fellow-citizens to exert their influence to obtain the nomination of unobjectionable candidates for the November election, and to further that end by co-operating with all Republican organizations working for the same object.

"*Resolved*, That if the delegates of the Republican convention, about to assemble, will respect the demands of the true and earnest men of the party and place in nomination only men of recognized capacity and honesty, this League will gladly recommend the citizens of Pennsylvania to give them a solid support, and will do all in its power legitimately to secure their election.

"*Resolved*, That if, in defiance of the wishes of the great body of the Republican party, the Conventions shall nominate persons of doubtful fitness or suspected integrity, the Union League will not hesitate to condemn such action, and it will adopt such measures as will in its judgment secure the defeat of such nominees. The responsibilities in such cases will rest on those who, for the gratification of personal ends, persist in defying the popular will.

"AMOS R. LITTLE,
"*Chairman.*

"ROBERT R. CORSON,
"*Secretary.*"

The newspapers commented upon this action as follows:

"*Public Ledger*," *May* 15, 1875: "It will be found to contain sound doctrine and wholesome admonition. All this is rightly put; and the Republican caucus of Common Council responded to it on Thursday, by nominating William M. Bunn as a candidate for Guardian of the Poor."

The "*Press*" *of May* 11, 1875, said: "The language of the address is that to which no Republican will except."

The "*Times*" *of May* 11, 1875, said: "The resolutions and address are sound, strong, and timely."

The "*Sunday Press*" said: "This is well said. We hope, if the Pilgrim 'Ring' should manage the Republican nominations for the offices to be voted for at the November elections in the manner usual on such occasions, this Committee of Sixty-two will head a rebellion, and, repudiating the bad nominees, will present such as are worthy," etc.

The "*Sunday Dispatch*" *of May* 16, 1875: "These sentiments will be indorsed by every honest and upright Republican. Let all such follow the League in demanding unexceptionable nominations, and in case bad nominations are made in spite of this demand, let them bolt and scratch without hesitation. There is no other way to teach corrupt men who 'run the machine' a wholesome respect for popular sentiment—no other way to effect 'reform within the party.'"

Shortly after the publication of this address, the Republican members of Councils met in caucus and nominated William M. Bunn and William N. Marks for Guardians of the Poor.

The whole press of the city at once exclaimed against such a proceeding, and the Committee, hoping that the voice of the League might be listened to, presented the following respectful appeal to those with whom the matter rested:

APPEAL OF THE UNION LEAGUE TO THE REPUBLICAN MEMBERS OF COUNCILS.

"There now rests upon *you*, as the elected representatives of the people, and upon the Union League Committee of Sixty-two, as representatives of a large body of Republican voters, a grave responsibility. *You* are about to elect Managers of the House of Correction and Guardians of the Poor, while *we* are intrusted with the voice and influence of the most powerful Republican institution of the State, to use in an endeavor to secure good nominations for the coming election.

"An address, recently published by the Union League, defines its principles and position in this canvass, and the first reply to its appeal is made in the nomination by your caucus of certain men for Guardians of the Poor, two

of whom are peculiarly objectionable to a large number of Republican voters. Your action in this matter is construed by some as a defiance of the wishes of the party. It certainly is hostile to its position, and offers encouragement to the coming Conventions to follow in the path you have marked out.

"Shall there be even the appearance of a conflict in our own party, on the eve of important State and National elections, in consequence of your action in this matter, when a change in your candidates would maintain good feeling, strengthen the Republican party in this city, and enable it to present a united front at the coming conventions in favor of the nomination of unexceptionable men?

"The Union League has deliberately taken its position, and intends to stand by its resolutions, while you, we believe, have acted hastily and without due consideration. Anxious to avoid an issue, although we shall meet it without hesitation if forced upon us, knowing that we represent the sentiments of the earnest men of our party, and determined, so far as in our power, to carry out all the pledges of the League made at its special meeting in November last, we respectfully submit that it is for you to to say whether there shall be harmony, good feeling, and united action in the Republican party this fall. A reconsideration of your recent action, and the election to the offices now to be filled by you of men of character so high that none dare question their fitness for the position, will go very far towards accomplishing this desirable result.

"Entertaining these views, this Committee has

"*Resolved*, That we respectfully ask the Republican members of Select and Common Councils to reconsider the nomination of William M. Bunn and W. N. Marks, for Guardians of the Poor, and to substitute for them the names of men who possess the confidence of the members of the Republican party, and whose fitness for the position no one will question.

"*Resolved*, That we urgently request that none but men of the very highest character shall be elected to fill the vacancies in the Board of Managers of the House of Correction.

"Amos R. Little,
"*Chairman.*

"Robert R. Corson,
"*Secretary.*

"*May* 18, 1875."

Councils soon met, and, under the whip and spur of the Ring (for many otherwise reputable members were driven to join in their action), defiantly insulted the League, and shocked the sense of the whole community, by electing Messrs. Bunn and Marks to the positions demanded by them.

In the language of a once mighty exponent of the same kind of power, thus exercised, the League was asked, "What are you going to do about it?"

The Committee, *a week after the election*, responded in the following terms:

"UNION LEAGUE HOUSE,
"PHILADELPHIA, August 11, 1875.

"A meeting of the Committee of Sixty-two was held at the Union League House on June 10, 1875, attended by a large majority of the members.

"The Executive Committee, through Lemuel Coffin, Esq., Chairman, reported the following resolutions, which were adopted unanimously.

"*Whereas*, The Republican members of Councils have, notwithstanding the respectful appeal of the Union League, and in the face of the earnest protest of almost the entire press of the city, and contrary to the desire of every good citizen, elected William M. Bunn and William N. Marks as Guardians of the Poor; and

"*Whereas*, This utterly indefensible action clearly indicates the fixed purpose of that existing combination of Republicans and Democrats, which thus subjected Councils to its will, to assume to be and to act as the masters of the Republican party; to dictate to its conventions whom they shall nominate, and to the people whom they shall vote for; and can be looked upon only as a bold defiance of every member of the party who may, in the interests of honesty and decency, venture to question its decrees; and

"*Whereas*, In the opinion of this League the time has arrived when it is absolutely essential to the preservation of the Republican party in this city that the present combination of party managers should be broken up, and that those men who still feel that the party is one of principle, with a work to perform and an object to attain other than the personal aggrandizement of office-holders and office-seekers, should determine not to remain longer subject to their command and purposes; and

"*Whereas*, This action of Councils has also shown that so long as the men now in power are permitted to control the Republican party, it is idle to ask for or to expect any improvement in the character of our public officials, and that nothing but the extreme measure of an open and uncompromising contest with them is left to the true and earnest members of the party:

"*Resolved*, That the Union League accepts the issue thus forced upon itself and all respectable members of the Republican party, and that it will, in pursuit of its expressed purpose to endeavor to obtain good nominations, and to support only thoroughly unobjectionable men, use its power and influence against the election of any candidates nominated by the conventions about to be held, who belong to or are identified with that dictatorial band of men, nominally of both parties but without true allegiance to either, which now rules and oppresses our city, and is disgracing and destroying the Republican organization.

"*Resolved*, That the Republican voters of this city are earnestly called upon to assert and prove their independence of the present party rulers, and, by concerted action in their several wards, to assist the League in its present work.

"In the judgment of this Committee, the votes of ten thousand Republi-

cans withheld from 'Ring' nominations at the approaching election will insure their defeat and the disruption of their vicious combination, as well as permanently purify and strengthen the Republican party.

"*Resolved*, That this Committee will receive contributions from the members of the League and other citizens to defray the necessary expenses of the approaching campaign upon the basis of its former address and these resolutions. "AMOS R. LITTLE, *Chairman*.

"ROBERT R. CORSON, *Secretary*."

On this action the editorial comments were as follows:

"*Public Ledger*."—"The election of Wm. N. Bunn is a lamentable illustration of the 'caucus' system." "Who and what Wm. N. Bunn is does not need be told to the intelligent people of Philadelphia."

The "*Sunday Times*," *June* 13.—"The Union League has now an opportunity." "Since John P. Verree succeeded Morton McMichael as President things have changed somewhat If the League has resolved to make war upon the 'rings', it deserves to be honored for its good resolutions."

The "*Sunday Press*," *June* 6.—"Of Bunn and Marks neither the helpless paupers nor the people have anything good to expect."

The "*Times*."—"The Union League is vanquished by the 'Mysterious Pilgrims.'" "The Union League has been snubbed frightfully by Councils at the command of the Pilgrims."

The "*Bulletin*," *June* 10.—"We have plainly expressed our opinion as to this election, and have done what we could to arrest what we believe to have been a serious political error."

The "*Evening Telegraph*."—"This [the action of your Committee] is well done. Action of this character from so well organized and influential a body as the Union League cannot but be of great value to the cause of true Republicanism and good government in Philadelphia. The committee recognize the full significance of the situation, and they face the issue squarely." "They have struck a sturdy blow for the right." "If the League will live up to the policy enunciated by the committee, it may become the centre of an influence that will radiate far and wide, purifying, strengthening, and bringing again triumph to the Republican party."

"*Sunday Dispatch*," *June* 13, 1875.—"The Committee of Sixty-two comes up to its work with spirit." "All this is bravely and wisely said; and if respectable citizens, members of the Republican party, who are heartily sick of the frauds and corruptions which they have hitherto sustained by always voting the regular ticket, will determine hereafter to scratch with rigorous effort, and to vote against every bad nominee, much good will be accomplished."

"*Evening Star*," *July* 17.—"Once more the voters of Philadelphia will have an opportunity of participating in a fair and square fight, in which the issue will be 'ring' or 'no ring.'"

"*Sunday Press*," *June* 13, 1875.—"Deliverance is at hand. The brave and decisive action of the Union League Reform Committee has sealed the doom

of the ring." "It is noteworthy that the *North American* and *Bulletin*, which now condemn the action of the League, helped the League to force Mann off the ticket in 1868, and saw the party purged and strengthened by this action."

The "Times."—"All honor to the Union League. It has washed the last stains of the Pilgrim placemen from its skirts. It is a pointed departure from the Union League of one year ago."

It has been recently stated that the Committee is responsible for the *continuance* of Bunn and Marks in their present offices, and that had the Committee further postponed its "answer," those persons would have acceded to a request for their resignations. It is emphatically denied that the Committee ever had any information upon the subject of the resignations of Bunn and Marks beyond the vaguest statement made privately to one of the Committee that they might, at some future time, resign their positions. After the ineffectual appeal of the Committee *before* their election, and a week's delay *after*, it would have been weak indeed, even upon a formal communication to the Committee, to have deferred longer to the pleasure of those gentlemen. But their resignations would not have altered the condition of affairs. The question had become a much more important one than the personal issue involved in the selection of two unworthy men. It demonstrated the fact that an arbitrary power existed in this city sufficiently strong to *command* the action of Councils, and bold enough to carry on the Municipal Government regardless of propriety, the welfare of the citizen, or the real interests of the Republican party. It made this apparent to the most unbelieving Republican, and aroused the most timid to the danger to future good and honest government, from a further continuance of the same rule. The *election* of Bunn and Marks showed this; their *resignations* would not have mended the fault or abated the evil it indicated in the slightest degree.

Very shortly after, the Republican County Conventions met, and in almost every case went through the form of nominating the men whose selection had long before been determined upon

by the managers of the Republican party. The wishes of the people and of the League for *new* men, whose lives had not been spent in office, for men (in the language of the League address adopted May 21, 1868) "WHOM OFFICE SEEKS," were as contemptuously treated as in the case of Bunn and Marks. On the contrary, nothing was regarded but the personal advancement of those who sought and demanded their own selection; and at least two of the most prominent, one being the very chief of the Republican party managers, were presented for the suffrages of Republicans. It had been done over and over again before, and good Republicans had not rebelled. Would they not swallow the ticket once more? And so the question was asked again: What are you going to do about it?

The Committee did not act hastily. During the summer most of its members were out of town, and there was no desire to act save after time for consideration, and at a large meeting of its members. The time arrived. What was to be done?

Nothing but to manfully fulfill the pledges which the Committee had made to the party and the people in its resolutions of June 10, 1875. Nothing but to strike at the root of the evil which threatens the supremacy of the Republican party in this city, and is fast destroying it throughout the whole country. Nothing but to condemn the band of men who rule it in this city, and to refuse to indorse every candidate who owed his nomination to their power and will. This is the only field of action which is open to those members of the Republican party who still hope there may be reform within the lines of the party. We know we are misruled, and we know that the party managers are responsible. Until their despotic power is determined,—and nothing will end it but the defeat of their appointees,—it is useless to look for reform in the party, or for any change in the *personnel* of its nominations.

On September 24, 1875, the Committee met, forty-three members being present during the evening. General H. H. Bingham,

the candidate for Clerk of Quarter Sessions, appeared in behalf of himself and the other nominees upon the County ticket, and in a speech of more than an hour presented their and his claims for election. It was eloquent, but the tone of it was not calculated to influence the minds of gentlemen desiring to act according to their sense of duty. After a debate of considerable length, the Committee voted upon the resolutions submitted for its consideration, seriatim, and unanimously adopted the first and third. The yeas and nays were called upon the second resolution, and it was adopted by a vote of twenty-nine ayes and eleven nays.

The resolutions and the report accompanying them are as follows:

To the Chairman and Members of the Committee of Sixty-two of the Union League:

"*Gentlemen*,—Your Executive Committee would respectfully report that the State and, since your last meeting, on June 10, the County conventions of the Republican party have met and made their nominations.

"That the nomination of General John F. Hartranft for Governor for a second term was unanimously desired by the Republican party; his re-election by a large majority will be but a fitting reward for an administration of his high office conspicuously able, impartial, and upright. It is believed that Governor Hartranft will receive the support not only of the whole of the great Republican party, but also of many citizens not within our party lines.

"That in Hon. Henry Rawle, the nominee for State Treasurer, we have a candidate of unquestionable character, whose distinguished services to his own city are guarantees of the ability and fidelity with which he will discharge the duties of the office for which he has been nominated.

"That Hon. Craig Biddle, who has been nominated for Judge of the Court of Common Pleas No. 1, of this County, has already filled that office by appointment for nearly a year. During that time he has proved himself a most competent and upright judge, and his discharge of the duties of his office has given entire satisfaction to suitors, to the bar, and to the public. The people of this city have so often refused to change their judiciary for merely partisan reasons, that it is hoped that Judge Biddle will receive the support of a large majority of our citizens without distinction of party.

"That in the nomination of General Henry H. Bingham for Clerk of the Court of Quarter Sessions, of David H. Lane for Recorder of Deeds, and of John S. Wetter and David Martin for City Commissioners, we have not been so fortunate. In them we recognize the work of that clique or combination

of political managers which has so long misruled our city and driven from the Republican ranks so many of our citizens.

"It is the same dictatorial band of men, nominally of both parties, but without true allegiance to either, which, notwithstanding the respectful appeal of this League, in the face of the earnest protest of almost the entire press of the city, and contrary to the wish of every good citizen, elected William M. Bunn and William N. Marks to be Guardians of the Poor. They thereby assumed to be and acted as the masters of the Republican party and of the people, and defied every man who, in the interests of honesty and decency, questioned their action.

"Heretofore these men, calculating upon our adherence to the Republican party and our disinclination to vote against our political opinions, have made such nominations as pleased themselves, and have appealed to us to support them. While constantly promising reform in the future, they have urged upon us the necessity of supporting our party nominations and seeking reform within our party lines. Heretofore they have not miscalculated, and we, in our devotion to the principles of the Republican party and in reliance upon their promises of reform, time and again have blindly followed them.

"They have led us to destruction, and even here in Pennsylvania—a stronghold of our party—and in every other State in the Union the Republican party has steadily lost ground, until now we have buried the prestige of victory in the humiliation of almost universal defeat. There is but one way to retrieve ourselves. Either we must depose these self-elected leaders who have betrayed us, or the people will depose that party in whose principles are to be found the only safeguards of good government. The people demand and will have reform; within the lines of the Republican party if they can, without them if they must. We therefore report the following resolutions:

"*Resolved*, That the Union League of Philadelphia hereby ratifies and indorses the nominations of General John F. Hartranft, for Governor, and of Hon. Henry Rawle, for State Treasurer, and of Hon. Craig Biddle, for Judge of the Court of Common Pleas No. 1 of Philadelphia County, and earnestly urges upon its fellow Republican citizens to use their utmost influence and cast their votes in favor of their election.

"*Resolved*, That the Union League of Philadelphia cannot indorse or ratify the nominations of General Henry H. Bingham for Clerk of the Court of Quarter Sessions, of David H. Lane for Recorder of Deeds, or of John S. Wetter and David Martin for City Commissioners.

"*Resolved*, That with an entire concurrence in the principles of the Republican party and desire for its success in the ensuing election, and believing that the continuance of the candidates last named upon its ticket will result not only in their disastrous defeat, but also in the endangering of the success of our State ticket, we earnestly request said candidates to withdraw from the canvass, so that their places may be filled by others having the confidence of the voters of the Republican party and of the community."

Throughout this whole course of action the Committee at no

time strayed from the line of conduct adopted by the preceding Committee of Fifty-eight. It has differed from that Committee only in final judgment. The latter judged and condemned, even without hearing, two of the regular candidates, and then *indorsed* the whole ticket. This indorsement was everywhere accepted and paraded as the action of the League itself. The Committee of Sixty-two heard one of the candidates on behalf of all, but *did not* indorse the whole ticket. That is the whole difference; and the wise conclusion is, both Committees acting for like purposes and having exactly the same extent of power, that the Committee of Fifty-eight acted within, and the Committee of Sixty-two exceeded, its authority. Had the latter approved of all the candidates, you would have heard nothing of the present specious objections to its proceedings. On the contrary, its indorsement would have been eagerly accepted as the action of the "Union League," and all its present opponents would have joined in its loud praise.

But, as has been said, the Committee since that time has been the subject of the grossest abuse from the Ring newspapers and Ring politicians. As its members had been threatened beforehand, so now they have been slandered, until, in the choice language of a Sunday newspaper, the action of the Committee is characterized as "dirty conduct," and you are called upon to kick its members into the street.

Why this sudden fury, pursued to the lengths of untruth and personality? Because the Committee of Sixty-two has struck a blow at Ring rule in this city, which, if sustained by the members of the League and the people, will break up the monstrous combination now misgoverning and dishonoring our city, and because a disruption of this organization will disarrange the plans of those who have selected themselves for office in the near future.

Such, gentlemen of the League, is the question to be decided at the special meeting upon October 11. Do you not believe there is a Ring in Philadelphia, and that the Ring alone has nominated the

Republican candidates for Clerk of Quarter Sessions, Recorder of Deeds, and City Commissioners?

Is it not worth an effort to break up this Ring and purge the Republican party of the men now subsisting upon it? Is it not worth while to make a bold fight for reform in the party?—or will you drive thousands of your fellow Republicans to seek it elsewhere? These questions are for you, and, however you may answer them, the members of the Committee of Sixty-two who voted for the adoption of the second resolution at the meeting of September 24, 1875, feel sure that they have acted for the true interests of the League, the Republican party, and the people of the city of Philadelphia.

CHARLES E. SMITH,
Chairman of Meeting.

H. C. BROWN,
Secretary.

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